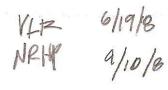
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form(National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

historic name <u>Union Church and Cemetery</u> other names/site number <u>VDHR File No. 089-0067-0</u> 03	27: 44ST0094
======================================	=======================================
2. Location ====================================	
street & number <u>Carter St. and Butler Rd.</u>	
city or town_Falmouth	vicinity N/A
	vicinity <u>N/A</u> code <u>179</u> zip code <u>22405</u>
======================================	
for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards fo	comments.)
Mey	
Signature of certifying official	Date
Virginia Department of Historic Resources	
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government	EAST-CONTRACTOR OF THE CONTRACTOR OF THE CONTRAC
In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the Nat comments.)	ional Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional
Signature of commenting official/Title	Date
State or Federal agency and bureau	
4. National Park Service Certification	
hereby certify that this property is:	
entered in the National Register	
See continuation sheet.	
determined eligible for the National Register	Signature of the Keeper
See continuation sheet.	
determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register other (explain):	Date of Action
other (explain):	and the second s

Union Church and Cemetery	Stafford County, Virginia
5. Classification	=======================================
Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)	Category of Property (Check only one box)
X private public-local public-State public-Federal	building(s) district site structure object
Number of Resources within Property	
Contributing O	
Number of contributing resources previously lis Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N	ted in the National Register 2 (listed within a district) /A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A
======================================	
	religious facility cemetery
Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions) Cat: _FUNERARY Sub:	<u>cemetery</u>
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Architectural Classification (Enter categories from inst _EARLY REPUBLIC: Federal	ructions)
Materials (Enter categories from instructions) foundation BRICK roof ASPHALT walls BRICK other WOOD	
Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current of	condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)
8. Statement of Significance	
Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in on listing)	e or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Regist

Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of

<u>X</u> A

Primary Location of Additional Data

X State Historic Preservation Office

___ Other State agency

___ Federal agency

___ Local government

___ University

X Other

Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources and the Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia;

Union Church and Cemetery			Stafford County, Virginia
10. Geographical Data			=======================================
	proximately 3 acres		
UTM References (Place add	ditional UTM references on a continu	uation sheet)	
Zone Easting Northing 1 18 284319 4244471	Zone Easting Northing 2	Zone Easting Northing	Zone Easting Northing 4
	See continua	ation sheet.	
	etion (Describe the boundaries of the explain why the boundaries were selected with the explain why the boundaries were selected with the explain why the boundaries were selected with the explain which is a selected with the explain		t.)
11. Form Prepared By			
	ls organization Mor		
	Street		
city or town_ Falmouth		state <u>va</u> zip code _	
Additional Documentatio			
Submit the following items with the			
A sketch map for hi submitted. Photographs Representation	or 15 minute series) indicating storic districts and properties tive black and white photogra with the SHPO or FPO for any	having large acreage or nur phs of the property. Photogr	merous resources. A sketch ma
Property Owner			=======================================
(Complete this item at the reques	st of the SHPO or FPO.)		
name <u>Lenetta Schools</u> , I	Union Church Trustee		
street & number 305 King		telepho	
City or town <u>Falmouth</u>		state <u>VA</u> 2	zip code <u>22405</u>
AND			
name Willie G. Shelton, J	r., Union Church Cemetery T		
	rrenton Road	rustee t state _VA_	

Moncure Conway Foundation, Falmouth, Virginia

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.). A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 36 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service, 1849 C St., NW, Washington, DC 20240.

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United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

Union Church and Cemetery Stafford County, Virginia

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

The approximate three-acre Falmouth/Union Church and Cemetery property, located in the northeastern section of the Town of Falmouth in Stafford County, Virginia, contains the archaeological sites of the 1733 and 1750s Falmouth Anglican churches and the standing remains of the circa 1819 Union Church. The narthex of the Union Church, 40 feet wide by 10 feet in depth with the rear bricked up, is what remains of the original structure. Although a remnant of the church, it is an excellent example of Federal-style church architecture with Flemish-bond handmade bricks, gauged brick semi-circular arches over the two entrance doors, the same over a lunette window in the gable, and gauged brick jack arches over the windows. The belfry is unusual in that it features a brick façade matching that of the main structure but has wooden sides and rear. The interior of the narthex contains an original stairway to the balcony. Above this balcony the framing extends upward to form the belfry which supports an estimated 300-pound bell. The Union Church Cemetery contains a handsome assortment of hand-carved headstones, dating from the 18th and the early 19th centuries through the 20th century. They include brown sandstone, marble, and granite markers ranging from the ornate to the very simple. Both vertical and horizontal table/tablet markers are present. The cemetery contains 461 marked graves and an unknown number of unmarked graves including those of African Americans. The grounds of the church and cemetery are well maintained. The sites of two earlier Anglican church structures on the property have the potential to yield in situ archaeological remains.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The Falmouth Anglican Church

The earliest site was utilized solely by the Church of England. The town of Falmouth was created by act of the Virginia General Assembly in the year 1727. The said act called for parcels to be set aside for a "church and church yard." At that time Falmouth was originally part of King George County and within Hanover (Hannover) Parish. A 1732 act of the Virginia Assembly split Hanover Parish with the upper part becoming a new parish named Brunswick. Accordingly, this same act called for "placing of the church of the said new parish of Brunswick… to be erected in the town of Falmouth, on the lot set apart for that purpose."

This first structure on the site was the Falmouth Anglican Church built in 1733 or shortly thereafter as a cruciform timber frame structure. It was located in an area that is part of the cemetery today. A ground feature exists, commonly referred to traditionally as where the old church was located, and appears centrally within the original boundaries of the "church and church yard." A further indication of its location may be gathered from a newspaper article dated 1819 which states that the old Church is in "the Old Yard", referring to the cemetery. The Historiographer of the Diocese of Virginia noted in 1916 "an old overgrown graveyard …covers the site of the first church." Having no surviving above ground evidence, the site is an important archaeological site.

The rectangular brick second Falmouth Anglican Church, which was 40 feet wide by 70 feet long, was constructed between 1755 and 1760 approximately 200 feet southwest of the site of the first Falmouth Church. This brick church with Lambs Creek Church in King George County, constructed around 1769, served the Anglicans of Brunswick Parish. The second church burned "about the year 1818" and was rebuilt in 1819 utilizing portions of the same brick foundation.

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The Falmouth Union Church

A union church pertains to a structure utilized by different denominations on a rotation basis. The Union Church at Falmouth, built 40 feet wide by 54 feet long, was designed in the Federal style and evidence indicates this building was standing by 1824. The community built a union church because there were not enough members of one single congregation in the Falmouth community to sustain a church building; therefore, it was utilized by the local Episcopalian, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Baptist congregations. As there were very few Episcopalians in Falmouth, the latter three denominations mainly used the church. Although the understanding was to rotate Sundays, it was not uncommon to have three services following on the same Sunday. Many of the townspeople attended all three services as the church also served as a community gathering place.

After the occupation of the church by Union troops beginning in 1862, the structure remained in disuse as a place of worship until 1868 when the trustees of the Town of Falmouth appointed specific trustees for the Union Church, charging them with repairs. A violent rain storm in 1950 severely damaged the roof of the church leading to a collapse of the chancel and nave, leaving only the narthex intact. The rear of the narthex, as it presently stands, was bricked up in 1954 by the community in an attempt to save what was left of the town's old landmark.

Exterior Description

A full exterior architectural description of the complete Union Church is possible based on the existing narthex and many historical photographs. ¹³ The original footprint was 40 feet wide by 54 feet long. The structure was brick laid in Flemish bond tooled with projecting ridge joints. The surviving narthex has a symmetrical façade featuring two entrances, each displaying a raised-panel reveal, double doors with raised panels, and eight-light arched transoms adorned with gauged brick semi-circular arches. The thresholds of the two façade entrances are stone, the right hand sill bearing carved initials oddly appearing upside down. A similar eight-light lunette is located at the attic level of the gable, and gauged brick jack arches over two nine-over-six, double-sash windows are situated at the balcony level. All windows (excluding the lunette) are fitted with louvered shutters. The gabled front is accented with a wooden rake. The belfry features a brick façade but has wooden sides and rear. A louvered opening is featured in the façade and on both sides of the belfry. The steep pyramidal roof of the belfry is flared at its base and crowned at its top with a wooden finial having an inverted urn base and sharply pointed extension. Under the belfry roof appears a simple cornice matching that below the main roof.

The steep gable roof was originally covered with hand-split wooden shingles. A simple wooden box cornice with bed moldings ran under the eaves. The sides contained three correspondingly spaced windows and the chancel contained two symmetrically spaced windows correspondingly placed with the two façade entrance doors and interior aisles. These windows were matching nine-over-nine, double-sash windows with gauged brick jack arches above. The sills of these windows were stone with shaped bull nose molding. The chancel also contained two interior small brick chimneys symmetrically placed and extended above the gable rake line.

The architectural plan typified a southern edifice intended for traditionally separated dual worship by race. No water source or privy facilities existed inside or out.¹⁵

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Twentieth-century repairs to the narthex include the addition of asphalt shingles, replacement of window sashes except one original lunette, replacement of the original finial, some re-pointing of mortar joints, and repaired brickwork at the base of the walls. A noted change in bond, color, and texture at the base of the brickwork are reportedly remnants of the second Falmouth Anglican Church footing utilized when building the Union Church. A number of bricks, especially at the southwest corner, carry a hodgepodge of initials and dates. Presently each entrance is ascended by a two-step cement block intended to appear as stone. The overall mass of the narthex retains good integrity and conveys a sophisticated Federal-style facade.

Interior Description

Although only the narthex remains today, a description of the church interior can be reconstructed using present evidence and oral history. The narthex provided entrance into the sanctuary by way of two entrances. It also contains a stair well ascending to a balcony. This balcony served as seating for slaves brought to church by their masters and for free blacks. The balcony has a two-tiered platform and was originally enclosed by a wooden front railing. Two closet—spaces, both of post-Civil War construction, are located in the narthex--one contained under the stairwell which has—considerable graffiti, and the other situated across the narthex and opposite the stairwell.

The following description of the sanctuary is based on oral history. The ceiling was an "open ceiling with rounded corners and covered with long narrow boards having tongue and groove." This description would indicate a vaulted ceiling containing an elliptical arch with the interior unbroken by columns. The interior walls of brick were covered with plaster. The flooring would probably have been random-width, tongue-and-groove, heart pine boards based on the present flooring in the narthex. The chancel of the church structure had two brick chimneys evidenced by existing photographic documentation, and oral interviews confirm that two wood stoves were located in the middle of the sanctuary, each having a stovepipe suspended with wire from the ceiling and connected to their respective chimney.

The suspended stovepipes provided an additional source of heat. The sanctuary was set with box pews and contained two aisles. An estimated 500 or more persons could be seated in the sanctuary with additional seating in the balcony. After the Civil War, the boxed pews having been cut up and burned, crude benches built by the community in 1868 replaced the pews. Two good examples of these church benches among several in poor condition are currently stored inside the narthex.

The Union Church Cemetery

The Union Church Cemetery, also known as the Falmouth Cemetery, contains many early grave markers of hand-cut stone, some ornately carved, and with a few instances of funerary art. Among the graves of prominent individuals is the grave of James Hunter, owner of the eighteenth-century ironworks located nearby, which is surrounded by early wrought-iron fencing.¹⁷ The cemetery contains African-American graves, many of which are unmarked.¹⁸

The Union Church Cemetery became a burying ground during the Civil War starting with the burial of the soldiers killed in a skirmish on April 17-18, 1862, resulting in the first occupation of Falmouth by Union troops between April and August, 1862. Interments continued as the church and later the adjacent Conway House were utilized as

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Union Church and Cemetery Stafford County, Virginia

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hospitals²⁰ and as soldiers died of their wounds resulting from the battles of Fredericksburg (1862), Chancellorsville, including 2nd Fredericksburg (1863), the Wilderness, and Spotsylvania Court House (1864). During the winter and spring of 1862-1863 the Union army occupied Stafford County including Falmouth and many deaths resulted from disease and the harsh winter. At the end of the war in 1865 part of the Union army commanded by General William T. Sherman marched from North Carolina to Washington stopping in Falmouth, again bringing convalescing wounded and sick soldiers. Given an accumulative 12 months or more of occupation and four major battles, the area was probably inundated with corpses needing burial.²¹ Nonetheless, no above-ground evidence remains today of Civil War interments in the Union Church Cemetery.

Soldiers' graves were later moved to the Fredericksburg National Cemetery; however, it would not be uncommon to miss makeshift and unidentified graves. The names of twenty-four Union soldiers have been identified as buried in the Union Church Cemetery. Eighteen identified Union burials and thirty-nine unidentified soldier burials were recovered and re-interred in the Fredericksburg National Cemetery. Oral tradition contends there is an unmarked Confederate mass grave in the cemetery possibly from prisoner death or due to sickness when the area was Confederate occupied; however, there is no evidence to substantiate this claim.

Wisconsin soldiers reportedly desecrated graves in the cemetery in search of jewelry which had been buried with corpses, as a source of barter with army sutlers in the town of Falmouth. Soldiers vandalized existing markers for material to make makeshift memorials for their own dead.²⁴ Headstones may have been utilized as makeshift fire hearths for winter huts during the 1862-63 winter occupation. The potential for many unmarked graves is significantly high.

An older section of the cemetery is situated northeast of the Union Church and contextually associated with the first Falmouth Anglican Church site. An apparent wide and odd distribution of earlier grave markers seems to indicate the probability that existing unmarked burials lay in between. Random low protruding stones without inscriptions may indicate a headstone or a plot boundary marker. This area contains one raised horizontal stone tablet and six horizontal stone tablets at grade.

The area of the cemetery that declines at the southeast corner contains fill dirt material deposited in the 1940s, 50s, and 60s. In an oral interview with an aged resident it was related this less desirable area was an early burial ground for African Americans. After the fill dirt was deposited "white" graves were placed above and over top of the African American graves. After the fill dirt was deposited "white" graves were placed above and over top of the African American graves.

An oral interview with an elderly trustee of the cemetery identified an additional area of unmarked African-American graves in what would be considered the outer fringe of the cemetery. This area was pointed out as parallel and adjacent to current Butler Road and with some extension from the northeast corner southward. A deep ravine along the east side extended southward toward the river. Filled in around 1940, the area currently serves as a parking lot for the Ray Grizzold Community Center, formally an old Falmouth school building.²⁷ The area identified as containing unmarked African-American graves includes two of the only three identified African-American graves within the cemetery.

An area of the cemetery closer to the Union Church contains predominately late-nineteenth- and twentieth-century graves, many of which are contained in separately maintained family burial plots evidently created in the post-Civil

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War era. Some of these plots are enclosed with some kind of small low concrete wall. A date of 1920 is scratched in one wall surface and would be fairly indicative of the time period during which these little enclosures were popular. One enclosure has a well-laid mortared stone wall with an iron gate, while another enclosure features round iron pipes. Enclosed or not, the appearance of these plots is neat and orderly.

In this area what can be termed "depression era" grave markers are found. These were made by a family member or by someone known locally who was skilled at making them. Cement would be mixed with gravel and poured into a mold simply made from carving out earth in the form of a grave stone, then smoothed over by a board. Smaller in mass, the markers had simply curved tops and were all that could be afforded by some residents. Several indicate an attempt was made to scratch an inscription on them; however, these inscriptions are all illegible today.

Grave markers of stone window sills appear as a convenient source of architectural elements salvaged from Falmouth's abandoned structures or those damaged during the Civil War. Since the cemetery has remained in continual use, it contains the graves of veterans of American wars and conflicts from the American Revolution through the Vietnam War.

The cemetery is elevated along present day Butler Road and atop this area is placed an artillery gun dating from the first half of the twentieth century, pointed toward the road. In front of this artillery gun is a horizontal tablet denoting its donation to the Falmouth Cemetery by the U.S. Navy in 1963. This is accompanied by a tall flag staff proudly flying the American flag for the community. A ground light illuminates the flag at night. A modern brick two-tiered raised platform with a tablet reads:

IN MEMORIAM
IN MEMORY OF THOSE WHO LIE
ON THIS HISTORIC HILL WHERE
TIME AND NATURE HAVE ERASED
ALL EVIDENCE OF THEIR FINAL
RESTING PLACE
FOUNDED 1727

A modern utility shed of portable type and barn shape is presently located at the back of the cemetery (south boundary). It is used for grounds keeping implements and storage of a riding lawn mower. The east boundary was previously identified by modern post and wire cable fencing running its length until, in 2007, it was replaced with a low brick wall containing intermittent brick columns. This low wall was designed to enable visitors to easily step over it. The wall was built with reproduction oversized brick using colored mortar and tooled joints. Within the cemetery are twenty-two tall stately cedar trees.

Prominent Graves

Three example grave stones have been chosen to demonstrate the cosmopolitan nature of Falmouth at an early period in its history. One grave stone is for an industrialist, one for an African American, and the last for an exile.

The first grave is enclosed with early wrought iron fencing and a twentieth-century plaque bearing the inscription:

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JAMES HUNTER

OWNER OF THE FAMED HUNTER IRON WORKS IN STAFFORD COUNTY,
WHICH MANUFACTURED MOST OF THE CAMP UTENSILS AND WEAPONS
FOR THE VIRGINIA FORCES DURING THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR.
A TRUE PATRIOT, HE RECEIVED LITTLE, IF ANY, COMPENSATION.
THIS SIGN FURNISHED BY THE VIRGINIA SOCIETY OF THE SONS OF THE
AMERICAN REVOLUTION

The following is taken from "Culpepper Minute Men patriots":

James Hunter was the owner and operator of the Hunter Iron Works at Falmouth, which provided the overwhelming majority of muskets and iron cooking implements for the Virginia troops in the Revolutionary War. He produced: muskets, rifles, bayonets, swords, pistols, and large-bore wall guns. For the Virginia Navy he produced: anchors and ship fittings. He outfitted the Virginia troops who played a vital role in the Battle of Cowpens, and also those who were at Yorktown. Hunter's Iron Works were so valuable that Governor Thomas Jefferson ordered special military protection for the industry. Hunter was never adequately paid for his services and he suffered serious financial setbacks as a result. James Hunter sacrificed his fortune for the cause of independence and is considered a true patriot.

The site of the Hunter Iron Works is situated on the Stafford County side of the Rappahannock River slightly upstream from Falmouth. It was listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places in 1974.

The second grave is that of John D. Baptist and has a stone with the following inscription:

Here lies
the body of
John D. Baptist
a native of the island of St. Kitts
in the West Indies.
who departed this life
September the 3d. 1804
in the 64th year of his age.

The following is taken from "African American History in the Rappahannock Region":

John DeBaptiste...served as a sailor on board Fielding Lewis' ship, The Dragon, which patrolled the Rappahannock River and parts of the Chesapeake Bay during the Revolutionary War. The Dragon was built in Fredericksburg in 1777.

She had the distinction of having more African-Americans serve on her than any other ship during that time period. John DeBaptiste, a native of St. Kitts, served on The Dragon which later saw action in the Chesapeake Bay. He was later prominent in local business, owning much property and running the ferry at Falmouth.

The third grave is that of J.B. Herard and has a stone with the following inscription:

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Union Church and Cemetery Stafford County, Virginia

SACRED to the memory of

to the memory of J. B. HERARD a native of France who was exiled by Louis 18th. in 1815 and died in Falmouth Va. October 11. 1834. Aged 79 tears.

Herard must have found Falmouth a safe haven. He is reported to have been "one of the officers of Napoleon, a French nobleman, Count Herard, who fought through all the Napoleon wars...He and Lafayette embraced and kissed each other when they met on the occasion of Lafayette's visit here in 1824."²⁹

Epitaphs

Three examples of epitaphs have been chosen to demonstrate the social mindset of an earlier period of our nation's history. ³⁰

Here lies the Grief of a fond Mother & the blasted expectation of an indulgent Father

ANN MARIA WALLACE who departed this life Nov. 23rd. 1800 Aged 8 years & 3 months

Jesus said suffer little Children & forbid them not to come unto me. for of such is the kingdom of Heaven Math Chapr 19:14

The top profile of Ann Maria Wallace's stone marker bears a winged head. The opening lines portray the love of a mother; however, the father expressed expectations.

SACRED
To the memory of
Mrs. LUCY A. DICKINSON
Who departed this life.
April 1st. 1830:
Aged 24 years. 6 months. 11 days.
Amiable to her acquaintances.

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Union Church and Cemetery Stafford County, Virginia

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Dutiful to her parents.
Devoted to her husband.
Some healthful friend may drop a tear.
On these dry bones. and say.
These once were strong as mine appear.
And mine must be as they.
Thus do these mouldering members teach.
What now our senses learn.
For dust and ashes loudest preach.
Man's infinite concerns.

Come gentle friends afford some kind relief. To her poor husband overwhelmed in grief. Off from his side the dearest part is torn. The rest still lingering, only lives to mourn

The top profile of Lucy A. Dickinson's stone marker is shaped in a style more typical of New England. The epitaph contains three sections; the first two are like those found on both New England and southern markers, while the third section is of southern origin. To wit: the deceased's attributes, followed by the admonition, which is usually the epitaph's ending; however, added is the acknowledgement of grief.

IN MEMORY OF OSBORNE MERRICKS. Servant of Murray Forbes Aged 85 years.

"Well done thou good and faithful servant thou hast been faithful over (remaining inscription buried below ground)

Merricks was a slave. On his low stone marker, dates of birth and death are omitted, and the only attribute noted is that he was a good servant. "Murray Forbes, by 1850, was a 65-year-old Stafford merchant with \$38,000 in real estate and 13 slaves. Forbes had once been director of the port of Falmouth, as well as a businessman and land owner. The slave Osborne was the coachman for the Forbes family. A daguerreotype photograph of him still exists, showing him posed with a top hat and a carriage whip." ³¹

Funerary Art

Five examples of popular motifs in funerary art are present in the cemetery and are as follows:

- 1) Little Lamb lying down (two)--one example is associated with an infant's death, first half 20th century.
- 2) Tree Trunk perhaps representing the tree of life cut down ("Woodsman of the World Federation") 1941.
- 3) Weeping Willow Tree and Urn representing mourning (willow tree) and life (urn), early 19th century.

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Staf	ford	Cou	ınty,	Vir	ginia	

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- 4) Winged Head (angel) representing the ephemeral nature of this world and the inevitability of death, early 19th century.
- 5) Coffin-shaped stone markers (two)--these little objects can be easily missed as they lay side by side amidst finer headstones. They bear no inscription and most likely represent the burial of infants or children.

In the account of John Washington (see Section 8, <u>Civil War</u>) he wrote: "On some of the tombstones could be dimly traced the birthplaces of some in England, Scotland, and Wales as well as Ireland. And amidst grand old tombs and vaults..." Today one cannot find markers that match the birthplaces noted in the account nor the grand old tombs and vaults. The quote is further evidence of the cosmopolitan residency of Falmouth and indicates the early immigrants who came to the Virginia colony.

Today the cemetery has horizontal tablets and one raised tablet; however, it would appear that Washington saw a cemetery more striking for its collection of tombs and funerary art which included boxed burial vaults, but the researcher must keep in mind that the cemetery underwent devastation due to a prolonged occupation during the Civil War. One wishes the cemetery had retained all its former glory; however, its evolution through war and reclamation is a vital part of a significant historical past.

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Union Church and Cemetery Stafford County, Virginia

Section 8 Page 10

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The approximate three-acre property containing the Union Church and Cemetery, located in the northeastern section of the Town of Falmouth in Stafford County, Virginia, is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A for significance in the area of religion, and under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. It also meets Criterion Considerations A and D for a religious property and cemetery significant in the history of the Falmouth area. Listed originally as a contributing structure and site with in the Falmouth Historic District (listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places in 1969 and 1970, respectively), the property contains the surviving narthex of the brick Union Church built circa 1819, two sites of earlier frame and brick Anglican churches, built in 1733 and the 1750s, respectively, and a large cemetery containing early grave markers, some ornately carved, and interments of Civil War soldiers and African Americans, many of them unmarked. Together, these resources are significant in the religious history of Stafford County from the colonial period through the mid-twentieth century, 1733 to 1958. The only church in Falmouth for many years, the church represents the dominance of the Anglican Church in colonial Virginia history, the disestablishment of the church after the American Revolution, the popularity of union churches during the nineteenth century, the church's use as a hospital and barracks during the Civil War, and its importance as a local landmark, a veritable icon, in the Falmouth community throughout the twentieth century to the present. Although only the narthex of the circa 1819 church survives, the edifice is a good example of Federal-style church architecture with its imposing Flemish-bond brick façade featuring two symmetrical entrances, each topped by an arched transom, and a pyramidal-roofed brick and frame belfry, still containing its 1867 bell.

Early History

The town of Falmouth was created by act of the General Assembly in 1727. This act instructed the town trustees to provide for a church and church yard and the site chosen, located in the northeastern section of the town, became known as "Church Hill" and the street running by the church was renamed "Church Street." The placement of an elaborate church and cemetery on a hill overlooking the town is indicative of ecclesiastical practices in the early eighteenth century, as such placement "mystified the physical embodiments of religious ideology by setting it dramatically apart from ordinary people's experiences." The earliest church structure and cemetery are associated with the Carter family whose boxed pew was emblazoned with the Carter family coat of arms. This was no doubt for Charles Carter, son of Robert "King" Carter, father and son being original trustees of Falmouth town. Since the Carter family was the driving force behind the conception of the town of Falmouth, the first church built in cruciform plan may have been patterned after Christ Church in Lancaster County. As occurred in the first Christ Church, built by John Carter, the wooden form in Falmouth may have been intended for replacement by a brick cruciform church. As his

father exerted a heavy handed influence over Christ Church, Charles Carter probably did the same over the first Falmouth Church.

During the early to mid-eighteenth century, Falmouth reached a turning point with regard to a decline in its fortunes and population, while its neighbor across the river, Fredericksburg, grew and prospered. Robert "King" Carter died in 1732 and Charles Carter had moved away by 1752, leaving the General Assembly to act on behalf of the townspeople in stating that it was "necessary and expedient that the said town of Falmouth be supported and maintained, and the

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bounds and streets thereof properly ascertained."³⁴ Since all of the original town's trustees had died except for Charles Carter, the General Assembly appointed new trustees, including Carter. The original wooden church structure may have suffered due to Falmouth's economic decline during the mid-eighteenth century. Not long after the General Assembly acted on behalf of the townspeople and appointed new trustees, a second brick church was built between 1755 and 1760. This second brick church was built approximately 200 feet southwest of the wooden church.³⁶

The American Revolution

Prior to the American Revolution the Anglican Church of England was the established church by law, supported by taxes and requiring all office holders in government to be Anglican.³⁷ The Anglican Church spread along the length of the Atlantic seaboard with the largest concentration of congregants in the coastal South. The Church of England had an hierarchical form of governmental rule through ascending bodies of clergy, headed by bishops and archbishops. Virginia did not have a bishop, resulting in the gentry class dominating the church vestry. This arrangement allowed them to influence church affairs and enhance their power in the community. The Anglicans "have always favored elegantly constructed churches with ornately decorated interiors. The purpose of all this outward show is to instill those attending worship with a sense of awe and piety."³⁸

During the mid-eighteenth century the Great Awakening spread throughout British North America and popular support for Anglicanism suffered, while more evangelical Protestant congregations increased. The struggle for religious freedom paralleled the struggle for political freedom. In early December 1776 the Virginia Assembly passed an act stating:

That all and every Act of Parliament, by whatever title known and distinguished, which rendered criminal the maintaining any opinions in matters of religion, forbearing to repair to church or the exercising any mode of worship whatever, or which prescribes punishments for the same, shall henceforth be of no validity within this commonwealth. Whereas there are within this commonwealth great numbers of dissenters from the church established by law, who have heretofore been taxed for its support...Be it enacted,...That all dissenters from the said church shall from and after the passing of this Act, be totally free and exempt from all levies and impositions whatever towards supporting and maintaining the said church as it is now, or hereafter may be, established, and its ministers.³⁹

Beginning in 1778-1779 the Virginia General Assembly started receiving petitions for complete disestablishment of the Anglican Church. ⁴⁰ Thomas Jefferson's Statute of Religious Freedom, adopted January 16, 1786, ended all establishment of the Anglican Church in Virginia. During the American Revolution the second Falmouth Anglican Church witnessed a historic scene below the heights and at the river. An historian's account follows:

General Count de Rochambeau and French troops transited Stafford in mid-September 1781. In fact, French Army troops of Rochambeau twice used Falmouth ford. Gen. George Washington, in New York, planned use of the 5,000 man French expeditionary force. When he became aware the French fleet was headed for the Chesapeake from the West Indies, he directed his forces to the Virginia Peninsula. Washington wrote to Rochambeau and his Continental troops on the march south: 'From (Georgetown) a rout must be pursued to Fredericksburg, that will avoid an inconvenient ferry over Occoquan, and Rappahannock river at the Town of Fredericksburg. The latter may, I believe, be forded at Falmouth...' After the Yorktown victory in October 1781, Washington and his French allies moved north through Falmouth. A French engineer sketched the ford at Falmouth. It is estimated that 4,000 French troops and 2,500 Continentals crossed at the ford.⁴¹

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A French officer associated with Rochambeau's troops passing through Falmouth in 1781-1782 noted visits to "a rather fine Protestant Church..."

Nationhood and the Antebellum Period

Falmouth was described in 1795 as "three quarters of a mile above Fredericksburg. It is irregularly built, and contains about 150 dwellings, and an Episcopalian Church." The last rector of Brunswick Parish was Rev. Alexander MacFarland (or McFarlane) who was rector from 1792-1796. He Anglican Church transformed itself into the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States in 1789 and may have utilized the second Falmouth Anglican Church before it burned about 1818 according to a historiographer of the Diocese of Virginia. The probable dual use of the church by Episcopalians and other Protestants would have led to the structure being rebuilt by the community as a union church, one that was used by several different Protestant congregations.

The Union Church, built after the second Falmouth Anglican Church burned about 1818, is mentioned in the *Virginia Herald* in 1819 as "the erection of the new one ... to be used by Christian Preachers of different denominations in all respects as heretofore." The Union Church is depicted on a beaded purse attributed to a Falmouth resident and the belfry is shown displaying a French flag on the occasion of Lafayette's visit to Falmouth and Fredericksburg in 1824. In Joseph Martin's *Gazeteer* of 1835, the town is described as having "1 house of public worship free for all denominations..." From an account of childhood memories written by a visiting relative of a Falmouth family in the 1840s, the author states, "There was a church in Falmouth, of no particular denomination, open to the services of all, having been built by the common consent and contributions of the citizens... It had taken the place of an older structure and there was an old grave yard near by..."

In 1851 the Union Church was the scene of one of the earliest sermons of the abolitionist Moncure Conway. He later was compelled to leave Falmouth under threat of bodily harm in 1854. Conway would later become the most outspoken and radical abolitionist produced by the South, causing him to be dismissed by a church in Washington, D.C. in 1856 and compelled to leave another in Cincinnati, Ohio. In his autobiography, Conway wrote:

The only church in Falmouth was (and is) a "union" house. Catholics and Unitarians were unknown in our region, and I remember no Episcopalian service in Falmouth; but between Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians the village had two and sometimes three sermons every Sunday. Now and then some peripatetic propagandist appeared. I remember the impression made on me by a female preacher, the only one I ever heard in Virginia. A good-looking man sat beside her in the pulpit, but uttered no word; the lady—middle-aged, refined, comely---arose without hymn or prayer, laid aside her gray poke-bonnet, and gave her sermon, of which I remember the sweet voice and engaging simplicity. I also remember that a hypercritical uncle, Dr. J. H. Daniel, praised the sermon.

The walls in the vestibule of Falmouth church were thickly covered with caricatures of various preachers and leading citizens penciled by irreverent youth while waiting to escort the ladies home. Probably the contrarious dogmas set forth from a "union" pulpit may have had a tendency to keep clever youths from taking any of them seriously.

Among our elders there was a keen interest in the controversies which I think must have usually characterized the sermons.... The congregations in Falmouth included the elite, but it was different in the Methodist conventicle in Fredericksburg." He continued "....but the culminating event was my sermon in our own town, Falmouth. How often had I sat in that building listening to sermons---Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian---occasionally falling under the spell

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of some orator who made me think its pulpit the summit of the world! How large that church in my childhood, and how grand its assemblage of all the beauty and wealth of the neighborhood!⁵⁰

Moncure Conway also provided an illustration of African Americans worshiping in Falmouth during this period:

The immersion of the colored people was always a picturesque and affecting scene. Dressed in white cotton...they moved under the Sunday morning sunshine across the sands opposite our house to the river, and there sang gently and sweetly. There was no noise or shouting. The rite was performed by a white minister. After immersion each was embraced by his or her relatives. There was more singing, and the procession moved slowly away.⁵¹

The Union Church Cemetery contains areas of African-American burials identified through oral tradition. Although unmarked and located along what was considered at the time the less prominent rear or sides of the cemetery, many of these graves probably date to the antebellum period.

The Union Church is a classic example of a southern church built with two distinct architectural components associated with African-American attendance. A balcony story is accessed by a narrow winding stairway inside the narthex against its left side interior wall. It was traditional in southern churches to have a balcony used as seating for slaves and free blacks and two separate front entrances--one used by slaves and free blacks and the other one used by white congregants. Since the access to the balcony was located to the left inside wall, slaves and free blacks would enter by the left entrance. Additionally, by incorporating the stairway in the narthex, separated from the sanctuary, the church's floor plan minimized contact between the races. Other southern churches with a single front entrance incorporated a side door for this purpose.

During the antebellum period slaves and free blacks could not own church property; however, if a building was provided or given to them for purposes of worship, it had to have white trustees. In addition, an African-American congregation had to have a white minister. As there was no African-American church in Falmouth before the Civil War, most African-American residents probably attended Union Church.

The Civil War, 1861-1865

The Union Church and cemetery are strongly associated with the Civil War. The church itself was much used by Union troops during the conflict. The first occupation of Falmouth by Union forces occurred on the morning of April 18, 1862. Prior to this occupation a skirmish took place just above the village in which a Union officer was killed and the next day six other soldiers were killed and sixteen wounded. On April 23, 1862, a newspaper correspondent witnessed the following scene: "In the village of Falmouth there is one church which after the skirmish was used as a hospital.

Stains of blood now cover it; some of the pews still remain; the floor near the pulpit is strewn with torn leaves from hymnbooks the remnants of the Falmouth S.S. Library. In the belfry the bell remains; the citizens not having responded to Beauregard a cry for bell metal."⁵² The church bell would later disappear, apparently seized by Federal authorities and melted down for ordnance. In a post-war account, Walker P. Conway, a leading citizen whose property adjoined the Union Church, wrote to a niece that the church was used as a hospital during the war. 53 There are no

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known accounts of citizens worshiping in the structure from this point until 1868. No accounts are found of soldiers attending services in the Union Church, as they did in other churches across the river in Fredericksburg.

The events of April 17-18, 1862 would also affect the town in another manner--Union soldiers would be interred within the town's cemetery behind Union Church. On April 18 a slave named John Washington from Fredericksburg emancipated himself by crossing the Rappahannock River just above the Union Church, entering Union lines. In a post-war narrative, he remembers that on the early morning of April 19, 1862:

The soldiers had a sad duty to perform...The funeral was one of the most solemn and impressive I had ever witnessed in my life before. Their company (cavalry) was dismounted and drawn up in lines, around the seven new graves which had been dug side-by-side. The old Family Burying Ground wherein these new made graves had been dug contained the bones [of] some of the oldest and most wealthy of the Early Settlers of Falmouth. On some of the tombstones could be dimly traced the birthplaces of some in England, Scotland, and Wales as well as Ireland. And amidst grand old tombs and vaults, surrounded by noble cedars through which the April wind seemed to moan low dirges, there they was now about to deposit the remains of (what the rebels was pleased to term) the low born 'Yankee'.

Side-by-side they rested those seven coffins on the edge of these seven new made graves. While the chaplain's fervent prayer was wafted to the skies and after a hymn (Windham) had been sung those seven coffins was lowered to their final resting place. And amidst the sound of the earth falling into those new made graves, the 'Band' of Harris Light Cavalry broke forth in dear old 'Pleyal Hymn' and when those graves were finished there was scarcely a dry eye present. And with heavy hearts their company left that little burying ground some swearing to avenge their deaths.⁵⁴

In another account, Lt. Charles Morton of the 2nd New York Cavalry writes home, "...the men that were killed were buried on Saturday with all the honors of war, escorted by the two regiments of cavalry and 14th Brooklyn."⁵⁵ Of the seven bodies interred, two were identified as being moved to the National Cemetery in Fredericksburg after the war. As un-identified remains were also moved, it can be assumed the other five remains were re-interred in Fredericksburg. All seven soldiers fallen on April 17-18, 1862 are known by name, and a carte de visite image exists of the officer killed, Lt. James Nelson Decker. ⁵⁶

Another soldier would die as a result of his wound and was described by Wyman S. White, a member of the 2nd United States Sharpshooters, "with his bowels protruding from a saber wound, still alive and conscious."⁵⁷ His companions erected a memorial "to the graves of those who fell in the advance on this place" with materials obtained from neighboring graves. Union officers ordered that the grave markers be restored along with "suitable head pieces placed over the heads of our men..."⁵⁸ It may be noted that today the Union Church Cemetery contains a number of tall stately cedar trees perhaps similar to those "noble cedars" described by John Washington.

Additional interments in the cemetery would occur until Union forces vacated the area at the end of August, 1862. They returned again on November 17, 1862, preceding the Battle of Fredericksburg, and camped in Stafford County for the winter of 1862-63. Falmouth was occupied until June 15, 1863, during which time the Union Church Cemetery continued to serve as a burying ground for soldiers who died from wounds and illnesses.

During this second occupation, the Union Church was also utilized as a troop barracks. Oral tradition relates that during the winter: "The interior of the church was entirely destroyed by the Federals. The pews were all chopped to pieces and taken down and practically all the woodwork was cut up." In addition oral accounts suggest the church

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was used again as a hospital during this time; however, no evidence of a primary source was found. Two primary sources support the use of Union Church as a barracks, but given the vast number of wounded and convalescing soldiers it can be assumed these were also quartered in the church, giving some credence to the belief that the church continued to be used as a hospital.

The United States Christian Commission was operating in Falmouth during that same time and an excerpt from one of its reports follows:

An old tobacco warehouse on the very banks of the river, within hail of the rebel pickets, was cleared of rubbish, the broken ceiling and windows were covered with old canvas, and a small table, borrowed from a neighboring cottage, served as a pulpit. Here, on Sabbath afternoons and on each evening of the week, meetings were held which were largely attended...The village itself was a ruin: its church used as a barracks for troops; its stores and factories closed. A large number of the inhabitants were still there, living as best they could...old men, women, and children. The [delegation's] station agent ...organized a Sabbath school for children, which came to be held every day in the week. Thirty or forty little rebels were gathered in...⁶⁰

Because the Union Church was the only church in Falmouth, this is the building referred to as "its church used as a barracks" and the account further indicates the lack of an available sanctuary resulting in the use of a tobacco warehouse for religious meetings. The 20th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry performed provost guard duty in Falmouth and noted in its regimental history "an old grist mill was used…sometimes for prayer meetings…" with no mention of a church building.⁶¹

The diary of a member of the 7th Michigan Volunteer Infantry relates that after the Battle of Fredericksburg, "Our regiment is in a deserted village called Falmouth" and three companies of the regiment "are quartered in an old church building. Here we do picket." The 7th Michigan was one of three regiments that crossed the Rappahannock River on pontoon boats on December 11th, 1862, and engaged Confederate troops holding the city of Fredericksburg. This diarist also wrote that, following the Battle of Fredericksburg, a great religious revival broke out among the troops; however, no mention of a church building being used for services may suggest that Union Church was used only as a barracks at that time.

Prior to the Battle of Chancellorsville the Union army moved up river to outflank Confederate forces as part of the strategy for the ensuing engagement. Quartered in the church, Company B of the 7th Michigan Infantry was left behind to continue its picket duty along the river. Pickets discovered a secret telegraph wire submerged in the Rappahannock River and operated from the nearby Conway House, reporting movements of Union troops.⁶³ After the

Battle of Chancellorsville the Union Church continued as a barracks until mid-June when the army moved north, following General Lee into Pennsylvania and participated in the Battle of Gettysburg.

Another member of the 7th Michigan Infantry left his name carved into the plaster on the interior wall of the balcony section of the church.⁶⁴ The interior of the belfry reportedly contains carvings in its wooden framing that were left behind by soldiers. It is probable that Companies B, C, and I of the 7th Michigan Infantry were responsible for destroying the interior woodwork of the Union Church for firewood.

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It is possible the Union Church came under artillery fire; however, it cannot be determined by whom or at what instance. On a few occasions either side may have temporarily fired upon the village of Falmouth. A fragment of a three-inch diameter ten-pound Parrott-type artillery shell was found twenty-nine yards from the southwest façade corner of Union Church. Since the church is situated on a prominence the shell may have targeted troops congregated there and exploded nearby. Union artillery batteries were positioned on heights overlooking the Union Church during the Fredericksburg Campaign. The site could possibly contain Civil War artifacts including those associated with a hospital. Oral history relates numerous such artifacts were found in 1958-1959 by local relic hunters.

Just below the Union Church Cemetery hill was the camp of the 1st Minnesota Volunteer Infantry in which one member kept a diary mentioning a visit to the cemetery. An entry for January 9, 1863, records the inscriptions of several grave markers which he found of interest.⁶⁷ These same markers are present today. Local lore suggest some markers were used for target practice by Union troops with the bullets later dug out with pocket knives for souvenirs.⁶⁸

During General Grant's Overland Campaign of 1864, the Fredericksburg area was filled with wounded soldiers. As a prominent building not in use, Union Church was likely occupied again in some capacity during that time, given the massive number of casualties sustained at the battles of the Wilderness and Spotsylvania Court House.

Reconstruction to the End of the Nineteenth Century

The Falmouth community apparently thought much of their church and was willing to rebuild the interior and make the necessary repairs after the devastation of war. Reclaiming the structure was done in the difficult time of Reconstruction. The current church bell bears a date of 1867 and probably replaced the original bell as a casualty of the war. ⁶⁹ In 1868 Falmouth town trustees legally recorded in the Stafford courts a deed passing ownership of the church with specified adjoining land to church trustees. There is some indication that an unidentified group undesirable to the community may have intended to use the structure which prompted the community to reclaim the church. The church trustees were also charged with the use of the church as "not construed to include any colored or black congregation" an unfortunate example of southern social history in which the court recorded a legal document denying black citizens their civil rights.

During the late nineteenth century, the church continued to hold services. A childhood resident in Falmouth at that time would later write, "I think the little old brick church still stands at the top of the hill...It was a union church, no particular denomination, and we went to Sunday School there for many years. Often we had ministers of different denominations come out of Fredericksburg and the surrounding territory to speak to us. I recall an old minister, Mr. Burkhead (Episcopal)."⁷¹ This account is consistent with the church's continual use as a union church. The Union Church also continued to be a favorite gathering place for important community events. For example, Falmouth School was located near the church, and in 1898 or 1899 a photo known as "Scholars in the Making" was taken of the entire school's students posed in front of the Union Church.⁷²

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The Twentieth Century

The Union Church and Cemetery continued in use as a community focal point illustrated by an amusing event associated with Halley's Comet in 1910 and recorded by a resident:

Rumors were rampant that it was going to hit the earth this time—that it would fill the air with poison gas...Newspapers reported that the gasses were highly flammable and could set fires when the comet came near the earth. Like the Adventist of the 19th century, the local citizens agreed to gather in the Falmouth Cemetery on the night of May 20th, 1910. As darkness neared, however, most of the families started gathering behind the old Union Church at the top of Carter Street hill. Talking in whispers, they tried to keep their noisy children under control and close to them. The first scare came when a brown and white cow...wandered into the crowd from somewhere among the cedars on the hill. Mistaken for some other worldly apparition, the cow, unnerved by the screams of children and parents, gave out loud bellows, adding to the chaos. Finally the animal was duly identified and, with a slap on its rump, was sent off toward its home.

Among the group of about five young men were Henry Snellings and Tommy Humphries, who had gotten to the cemetery early and climbed the tall cedars to play a joke on the townspeople...The boys had spent several days making crude torches, which they lit and began throwing to earth from the trees just as the comet filled the night sky with its light. Most of the citizens ran screaming in panic out of the cemetery and back to their homes to wet down their roofs.

My father and a few others became suspicious of the narrow range of these comet-induced fires and arrived under the cedar trees in time to see Henry Snellings, with his pants on fire, come tumbling out of the top of a tree. Tommy's aim had been off when he flung one of the torches. Henry had a broken arm as a result of the prank, and the big tree caught on fire and was so badly burned that it later had to be cut down.⁷³

In 1915 area churches received compensation under a war claims act by the U.S. Congress. The Union Church received \$750.00 for damages sustained during the Civil War. The amount awarded bears witness to the severity of the destruction encumbered by the church. In November, 1918 the Union Church bell was rung with those of Fredericksburg churches to celebrate the ending of World War I. A 1930 photo taken in front of the Union Church again illustrates the importance of this community focal point. The image depicts the Union Crusaders Band which played at many local parades and concerts and held its practices at the Union Church in the 1930s The memories of a little girl in 1932 bears witness to the continued importance of the church within the Falmouth community:

The old Union Church is so fixed in my childhood memories...My mind's eye saw the welcoming 'afternoon' church with all its tall sparkling windows and the alter banked with greenery most of the year, magnolia in summer and cedar in winter. I thought of it as the "afternoon" church because the interdenominational membership had decided to hold services in the afternoon so they would not be in competition with the other church in the village, the Falmouth Baptist Church. Then too, all my cousins who were very active in the Union Church went to morning services at St. George's Episcopal Church in Fredericksburg.

My most poignant Union Church memory...was one of those rare Virginia Christmas days with snow on the ground, and I can still see the snow-dusted Christmas wreaths hanging on the two front doors of the church. There wasn't much snow, but it was fun walking up church hill....For me though, the familiar nativity scene was only the prologue to the main event, the arrival of Santa Claus....looking at the running cedar wreaths with their bright red bows on the windows...I watched as the afternoon shadows against the glass reflected the flames of the tall red candles. I was no longer watching the Christmas story, but looking for the entrance of Santa, wondering whether he'd arrive on the roof or on the snow-covered lane visible through the church windows.

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I knew the high-flying sleigh had landed on the roof when I heard sleigh bells sounding from the Union Church balcony... Every child stood up. Some like me climbed on the seats of the benches to get a first glimpse of the red suit trimmed in white fur. We were not disappointed. There he was, leaning over the rail of the balcony, waving and 'ho-ho-hoing.'... From there I could see Santa secure a rope to the balcony rail and come sliding down to the floor of the church. He carried a bag fully stuffed with candy canes and oranges and smiled fondly as he pranced up and down the two aisles, passing the treats to eagerly reaching hands. I can still close my eyes and smell the candle wax and Christmas greens and recapture for just an instant that wonderful moment."78

After 1935 the Union Church doors were shut.

In 2008 there are only two churches in Falmouth in addition to the Union Church located within the original town boundaries. These are Golgotha Church, located on the east side of present U.S. Route 1 north of the intersection of U. S. Routes 1 and 17 and Butler Road; and the Falmouth Baptist Church, located on the corner of Colonial Avenue and Butler Road. Built in 1892, Golgotha Church was previously the first Falmouth Baptist Church. With the present Falmouth Baptist Church, built in 1956 and 1964, both churches owe their origins to the Falmouth Union Church.⁷⁹

Union Church Summary

The Union Church remains today a prominent feature in Falmouth's landscape, a focal point for the community, and a poignant reminder of Falmouth's past. Throughout much of the nineteenth century until 1892 when the Falmouth Baptist Church was built, Union Church served as the Falmouth community's only house of worship.

The Union Church appears in a number of period Civil War sketches and continued to be the favorite subject of photographers and artists alike including nationally known local artist Gari Melchers. 80 Historians have been able to orientate period sketches and photographs of the town of Falmouth by the intended or fortunately unintended inclusion of the Union Church as a discerning object and focal point.

Placed at the Union Church façade is a marker designating Falmouth as an historic district listed in the Virginia Landmarks Register in 1969. This site was chosen to display the marker because Union Church is the most significant feature in Falmouth's historic landscape to represent the community. The Union Church has acquired an endearment and somewhat of a romantic past perhaps in part due to the community allowing the church to succumb to the unfortunate circumstance of partial demolition. Almost as soon as the structure suffered this fate, there were individuals who unsuccessfully endeavored to have it rebuilt. The remaining structure proudly stands today invoking memories and exciting stories from Falmouth's bygone days.

Union Church Cemetery Summary

The Union Church Cemetery is also known as the Falmouth Cemetery and in various Civil War accounts it is called the Falmouth Burial Ground, Church Burial Ground, or Falmouth graveyard and cemetery. Although most often referred to as the Union Church Cemetery, it began as the burial ground of the first Falmouth Anglican Church and later the second Falmouth Anglican Church. From this early period survive relics of a colonial past as shaped stones with molded edge appear, perhaps once components of grand raised tablets. Some have been given a second life,

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utilized for headstone markers by a family unable to afford one or someone wishing to identify a lonely grave lacking recognition.

Originally an Anglican cemetery, for more than 200 years the Union Church Cemetery has been a sacred cultural icon containing 461 marked graves and numerous unmarked graves. Many of the unmarked graves are those of African Americans, as well as soldiers who died during the Civil War. It also contains the graves of local veterans from the Revolutionary War through the Vietnam War. The oldest identified grave is dated 1758. The Union Church Cemetery has six court-appointed trustees separate from the Union Church trustees and interments continue to the present.

Archaeological Potential

Although no archaeological investigations have been conducted at the Union Church and the cemetery, there appears to be high archaeological potential to yield information pertaining to Anglican worship during the colonial period, military occupation, and medical history.

The Union Church and Cemetery site is one of the few urban early-eighteenth-century ecclesiastic sites to survive in Virginia. The remains of the 1733, 1750s, and 1819 churches can all be found within the site boundaries. In addition, the cemetery offers the ability to examine and interpret the sequence of a communal burial ground having undergone war, reconstruction, and social change.

ENDNOTES

¹ Hening's Statutes at Large, February 1727, Chap. XIV, pp.234-239. Falmouth was previously known as "The Falls Landing".

² Ibid, March 1623-24, pp. 122-123. Falmouth became part of Stafford County in 1776.

³ Ibid, May 5th and 6th, 1732, pp. 367-369.

⁴ Smith, Margaret L. "1720 Falmouth, Va."

⁵ "Virginia Herald" August 14, 1819. Page 3 col. 3.

⁶ Brydon, G. MacLaren. A Sketch of the Colonial History St. Paul's, Hanover, & Brunswick Parishes King George County, VA. 1916. Library of Virginia, 1 vol. 136 leaves typescript (accession number 19756) page 32.

⁷ Documentation for probe testing determining the dimensions can be found in Conway House Collections, Union Church File. Various dimensions have appeared erroneously in other accounts based on oral interview. For dates see Louis Berger Group, "Falmouth Historic District Nomination", 2006, p. 31. This nomination noted as a draft nomination subject to approval by DHR and intended to replace the original NR nomination for the district. Also Brydon Letter dated September 3, 1948.

⁸ Lambs Creek Church is listed on the National Register, 72001403 year 1972.

⁹ For "about the year 1818" date see Brydon Letter dated September 3, 1948. Also for the 1818 date see Louis Berger Group, "Falmouth Historic District Nomination", 2006, p. 35. This nomination noted as a draft nomination subject to approval by DHR and intended to replace the original NR nomination for the district. For the 1819 date see "Virginia Herald" August 11th, 1819 "Citizens of Falmouth and Fredericksburg, and Residents of Brunswick Parish" page 1, col. 1; August 14th, 1819 "To guard those who may" page 3, col. 3.

¹⁰ Documentation for probe testing determining the dimensions can be found in Conway House Collections, Union Church File. As with the previous structure, see note 6, various dimensions have appeared erroneously in other accounts based on oral interview. For 1824 date see beaded purse photograph included with the nomination. This photograph courtesy of the Fredericksburg Area Museum and Cultural Center, Fredericksburg, VA., Collections and Exhibitions, used with permission. This purse is attributed to a Falmouth resident on occasion of Lafayette's visit in 1824 to Falmouth and Fredericksburg. Note the French flag hanging from the steeple.

Falmouth Trustees Minute Book. Entry dated May 19, 1868. Also see Stafford County Deed Book Vol. 26-A, p. 509.
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National Park Service

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- ¹² Free Lance-Star, March 12, 1954,"Remains of Old Union Church Are Sealed Against Weather". The endeavor to close up the back of the church was preformed by the Falmouth Civic Improvement Club.
- ¹³ Union Church was recorded by HABS/HAER during the 1930's; included are two documentation photographs. A collection of additional historical photographs of the Union Church can be found in the Conway House Collections, Union Church files.
- ¹⁴ An original stone window sill was salvaged from the rubble pushed below the hill and currently in the Conway House Collections.
- ¹⁵ Oral interview in 2007 with Mr. Herbert Brooks, childhood Falmouth resident.
- ¹⁶ Much of the interior description was provided by oral interview in 2007 and 2008 with Mr. Herbert Brooks, Marion Brooks, and Chester Rogers.
- ¹⁷ This wrought iron fencing has been repaired with modern weld seams.
- ¹⁸ Oral interview and site visit in 2007 with Mr. Herbert Brooks, Cemetery Trustee.
- ¹⁹ Washington, John. "Memories of the Past", Chapter 8, p. 21. See also Blight, David W. <u>A Slave No More, Two Men Who Escaped to</u> Freedom Including Their Own Narratives of Emancipation. 2007, pp. 195-196.
- ²⁰ General McDowell commanded a secondary supporting force occupying Falmouth April 18, 1862 through August, 1862 while General McClellan conducted his Peninsular Campaign as the main drive before Richmond. General Lee's victory at the Battle of Second Manassas, August 29-30, 1862, resulted in Union forces withdrawing from Falmouth.
- ²¹ "Falmouth was subjected to direct occupation by Union forces for about one quarter of the duration of the Civil War, and for about 80 percent of the middle period of the conflict from April 1862 to June 1863." Dr. Kerri S. Barile, Dovetail Cultural Resources Group LLC communicated this information in 2008.
- ²² A record of the 24 soldiers identified is in Conway House Collections, Union Church File. This research was conducted in 2002 by Norman Schools with assistance from a historian with the National Park Service, Ms. Elsa Lohman, from Chatham.
- ²³ United States Quartermaster General's Office. <u>Roll of Honor: Names of Soldiers Who Died in Defense of the American Union, Interred in the National Cemeteries, No. XXV.</u> 1870.
- ²⁴ Official Records. 1881-1902. XXIV p. 53. "Special Orders No. 65 Headquarters Department of the Rappahannock opposite Fredericksburg, Va. May 13, 1862".
- ²⁵ Information obtained in 2007 from Willie G. Shelton, Jr., cemetery trustee.
- ²⁶ Oral interview in 2002 with Mr. Elliot Berry; an aged Falmouth resident now deceased.
- ²⁷ Oral interview and site visit in 2007 with Mr. Herbert Brooks, Cemetery Trustee. The ravine was originally an early roadbed which ran down to the Falmouth Ferry, long disappeared. Remnants of this road's embankment can be seen along one side and behind the parking lot of present Falmouth Baptist Church. This road from its opposite end turned out of Forbes Street to run down to the river. Remnants were pointed out by Mr. Brooks stating the road was abandoned long ago due to the steep terrain. The road was named Old Telegraph Road which name Forbes Street was also known as it ran north out of Falmouth.
- ²⁸ On the breech of this artillery piece is stamped: U.S. Rapid Fire Gun Powder Co., Derby, Conn. Model 1908. U.S.R.F.G.&P.Co. 3 Po S.A. MOUNT MARKX No. 591 FHC WT 600 LBS; on the breech block: 3 Pdr. BR.MECH MK.XI GUN NO. 591. There are additional stampings on the breech and a side plate. The artillery piece is painted black.
- ²⁹ Smith, Margaret L. "1720 Falmouth Va."
- ³⁰ Site visit and interview on November 30, 2007, with Professor John d'Entremont, the Theodore H. Jack Professor of History at Randolph College, Lynchburg, VA. Professor d'Entremont is a scholar on social history and Southern history and on the history of reform and social change. Photographs of each of the three grave markers included with the nomination.
- ³¹ Fitzgerald, Ruth Coder. A Different Story, A Black History Of Fredericksburg, Stafford, and Spotsylvania, Virginia. 1979, pp. 23-24.
- Louis Berger Group, "Falmouth Historic District Nomination", 2006, Section 8, p. 31. This nomination noted as a draft nomination subject to approval by DHR and intended to replace the original NR nomination for the district.
- ³³ Smith, Margaret L. "1727 Falmouth Va.". The Carter Family investors in Falmouth included: Robert "King" Carter, Robert Carter Jr., John Carter, Landon Carter, and son-in-law Col. Mann Page.
- ³⁴ Hening's Statutes at Large, February 1752, pp. 282-283.
- ³⁵ Ibid, p. 282.
- ³⁶ The 1755-60 dates are from the "Brydon Letter" dated September 3, 1948. Brydon was the Historiographer of the Diocese of Virginia and on page 2 of <u>A Sketch of the Colonial History Of Saint Paul's</u>, <u>Hanover</u>, <u>and Brunswick Parishes</u>, <u>King George County</u>, <u>Virginia 1916</u>, he states "The Vestry Books and Registers of all three parishes are lost…" further stating "a gleaning of the facts wherever they could be NPS Form 10-900-a

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found...has made possible the putting together of at least an outline of the history of each Parish." For the location of the second brick church Brydon states in the same work, "This second Church stood until shortly after the beginning of the nineteenth century, when it was destroyed, and a union Church built upon the foundation of the old walls" page 32. For the location of the wooden church see endnotes 5 and 6.

37 "...two persons, one in Hanover Parish and one in Brunswick Parish, were presented by the Grand Jury in 1737 for not attending church services for one month, and were fined five shillings each. Ten years later, in 1747, the Grand Jury presented five or six persons in Brunswick Parish for non-attendance..." information from: Brydon, George MacLaren D.D. Virginia's Mother Church. 1947, p.173, footnote no.12.

38 Heyrman, Christine Leigh . "The Church of England in Early America". National Humanities Center.

³⁹ Brydon, George MacLaren D.D. <u>Virginia's Mother Church, 1607-1727</u>. 1947, p.403.

⁴⁰ Brydon, George MacLaren, D.D. <u>Virginia's Mother Church</u> Volume II, p.396.

⁴¹ Conner, Albert Z. A History of Our Own: Stafford County, Virginia. 2003, p.102.

- ⁴² Louis Berger Group, "Falmouth Historic District Nomination". 2006, Section 8, p. 32. This nomination noted as a draft nomination subject to approval by DHR and intended to replace the original NR nomination for the district. Also see: Rice, Howard C. Jr. and Brown, Anne S.K., editors. The American Campaigns of Rochambeau's Army, 1780, 1781, 1782, 1783. 1972. The reference to a Protestant church may indicate the communities re-use of the structure as by this time the Anglican Church of England had fallen out of favor and many parson having returned to England.
- ⁴³ Described by Joseph Scott, compiler of "The United States Gazetteer". See Louis Berger Group. "Falmouth Historic District Nomination". 2006, Section 8, p. 33. This nomination noted as a draft nomination subject to approval by DHR and intended to replace the original NR nomination for the district.
- ⁴⁴ Brydon, G. MacLaren letter dated September 3, 1948. A Copy is in the Conway House Collections, Union Church files.
- ⁴⁵ Library of Congress, "Religion and the American Revolution". Brydon states in his <u>Virginia's Mother Church</u>, Volume II, p. 28: "Under the act of incorporation adopted by the General Assembly in December 1784, the first annual convention of The Protestant Episcopal Church of Virginia assembled in May 1785, adopted its first code of canon laws, and elected clerical and lay deputies to a meeting of similar deputies from other States which had been called to form a general convention." He also states the year for burning as 1818 in his "Brydon Letter" dated September 3, 1948.
- "Virginia Herald" August 14, 1819, page 3 col. 3.
- ⁴⁷ The beaded purse depicting the Union Church and the French flag was probably made as an accessory for attending a ball given in honor of Lafayette's visit. This beaded purse is in the Fredericksburg Area Museum and Cultural Center Collections, Fredericksburg, VA.
- ⁴⁸ Described by gazetteerist Joseph Martin. See Louis Berger Group. "Falmouth Historic District Nomination". Section 8, p. 36. This nomination noted as a draft nomination subject to approval by DHR and intended to replace the original NR nomination for the district.
- ⁴⁹ Crane, Lydia. "Falmouth A Virginia Village in the 'Forties' from a Child's Point of View". Free Lance, March 15, 1898. ⁵⁰ Conway, Moncure Daniel. <u>Autobiography, Memories and Experiences</u>. 1904. Vol. I, pp. 42, 43 and 102.
- ⁵¹ Ibid, Vol. I, pp. 27-28.
- ⁵² Correspondent. "Jamesville Gazette" Wisconsin, April 28, 1862 "H. Q. Seventh Regt. Wis. Vol. Camp No. 11 near Fredericksburg, Va."
- ⁵³ Crane, Lydia. "Falmouth A Virginia Village in the 'Forties' from a Child's Point of View". Free Lance, March 15, 1898.
- ⁵⁴ Washington, John. "Memories of the Past". Chapter 8, p. 21. See also Blight, David W. <u>A Slave No More, Two Men Who Escaped to Freedom Including Their Own Narratives of Emancipation</u>. 2007, pp. 195-196.
- ⁵⁵ Letter dated April 22, 1862 from Falmouth and written by Lt. Charles Morton, 2nd New York Cavalry. The other regiment of cavalry was the 1st Pa., this and the 14th New York Infantry participated in the advance on Falmouth.
- ⁵⁶ The original cart de visite image of Lt. Decker is in the Conway House Collections. An account of Decker's death states: "Lieut. Decker from Orange Co.[Conn.], was gallantly leading his men, and coming up alongside of a rebel officer, made a cut at him, when he turned and shot him with his revolver through the heart. He fell and his horse followed the rebels." The account is from a letter dated April 20, 1862 by another officer, Lt. Charles Morton, of the same regiment. The names of the other cavalrymen killed are as follows: Patrick Devlin, Co. M, 1st Pa.; Thomas Norton, Co. M, 1st Pa. Cal.; Michael Rudy, Co. M, 1st. Pa.; John Heslin, Co. L, 2nd N.Y.; Josiah Kiff, Co. H, 2nd N.Y.; and George Weller, Co. H, 2nd N.Y.
- ⁵⁷ White, Wyman S. The Civil War Diary of Wyman S. White 2nd United States Sharpshooters, 1993, p. 59.
- ⁵⁸ Official Records. 1881-1902, XXIV p. 53. "Special Orders No. 65 Headquarters Department of the Rappahannock opposite Fredericksburg, Va. May 13, 1862".

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- ⁵⁹ Louis Berger Group. "Falmouth Historic District Nomination". 2006, Section 8, p. 43. This nomination noted as a draft nomination subject to approval by DHR and intended to replace the original NR nomination for the district. Also see WPA report 1934.
- ⁶⁰ Moss, Lemuel. <u>Annals of the United States Christian Commission</u>. Philadelphia 1868. pp. 377-378.
- ⁶¹ Bruce. The Twentieth Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry 1861-1865. 1906. p.228.
- ⁶² Rice, Melvin. Company B, 7th Michigan Vol. Inf. Copies of 1902 transcripts from his Civil War diary, privately owned. A copy is in the Conway House Collections.
- ⁶³ Newspaper articles, "Philadelphia Inquirer" April 24, 1863 and "Boston Traveler" April 27, 1863, p. 2, col. 5. See also Official Records: Vol. XXV part 2, pp. 269-270, "Headquarters Army of the Potomac April 27, 1863" Joseph Hooker to Hon. E.M. Stanton, Secretary of War and Vol. XXV part 2, pp. 300-301, "Washington D.C. April 30, 1863-1:10 pm" Edwin M. Stanton to Major-General Hooker, Falmouth, Va. ⁶⁴ "7 M Edward Wise Co. I" Edward Wise was in Company I, 7th Michigan Volunteer Infantry. Wise survived the war but returned to Michigan and hung himself in a barn. See photograph of the carvings included in extra photographs.
- ⁶⁵ This shell fragment with its documentation is in the Conway House Collections.
- Oral interview in 2008 with Mr. Charles Michael Shelton, a relic hunter and Falmouth resident at the time. This relic hunting activity probably correlated to some type of grading and debris clean up of the grounds behind the narthex.
 Taylor, Isaac Lyman. <u>Campaigning with the First Minnesota</u>, <u>A Civil War Diary</u>. 1944, p. 241. See
- ⁶⁷ Taylor, Isaac Lyman. <u>Campaigning with the First Minnesota, A Civil War Diary</u>. 1944, p. 241. See his entry for "Fri. January 9".
- ⁶⁸ Related in 2008 by Billy Shelton, Cemetery Trustee.
- ⁶⁹ Bell waist inscription as follows: "NAYLOR VICKERS & CO 1860 SHEFFIELD 1867 ANO E. RIEP'S PATENT NAYLOR VICKERS". The bell appears to be steel alloy. For further description of the bell's mounting see Mann, Bill. <u>Bells and Belfries</u>. 1993, p.64.
- ⁷⁰ Stafford County Deed Book Vol. 26-A, 1868. p. 509.
- ⁷¹ Orr, Susan Hales. "Childhood Memories of Susan Hales Orr". p. 17.
- ⁷² A copy of this photograph is included in extra photographs. Most of the students have been identified. Conway House Collections.
- ⁷³ Foundation Stones of Stafford County, Virginia Volume II, 1992, pp. 176-179.
- ⁷⁴ Reported in <u>The Free Lance</u> March 6, 1915 "The Local Claims". A previous account based on oral tradition related the figure as \$800.00; however, no evidence was found to substantiate that amount. The Louis Berger Group Nomination 2006 cited Brydon's Sept. 3. 1948 letter for the same \$800.00 figure; however, the letter does not contain this information. According to the newspaper article the Union Church was one of fifteen claims listed as awarded. A copy of the article can be viewed on micro film reel at the Fredericksburg Rappahannock Regional Library or photocopy in the Conway House Collections, Union Church files.
- ⁷⁵ The destruction sustained to the Union Church structure occurred mainly to the interior; having the woodwork cut up for fire wood. The account relating this destruction is that of an oral source given by a long time resident during a WPA report on the church. The amount of the claim awarded (\$750.00) substantiates this destruction when compared to the \$800.00 claim awarded to Hartwood Presbyterian Church. See the National Register Nomination, Section 8, page 1 for that church which states "All the wooden parts of the building were used for firewood during the Civil War, and a description of the church's condition written in 1866 recorded that 'at the last not one vestige of the timbers or flooring was left. The pulpit, carpet, seats, blinds, sash, doors &c every thing that was combustible was burned leaving the brick walls standing."'
- ⁷⁶ An image of the Union Crusaders Band is included in extra photographs. Conway House Collections, Falmouth, VA.
- ⁷⁷ The little girl was Marion Brooks. An image of her at age six is included in extra photographs. Conway House Collections, Falmouth, VA.
- ⁷⁸ Foundation Stones of Stafford County, Virginia. Volume II, 1992, "A Christmas Memory" pp. 179-182.
- ⁷⁹ Shelton, W. G. Jr. "Religion in America, Churches of Olde Falmouth Towne." 1987. pp. 4 and 5.
- ⁸⁰ Civil War sketches include those by Edwin Forbes (LOC) and John Keyser 24th New Jersey (Lummis Library). Copies can be seen in the Conway House Collections, Falmouth, VA. Geri Melcher's painting entitled "Falmouth in Snow" ca. 1920 includes the Union Church. The painting can be seen at Belmont, The Geri Melchers Estate and Memorial Gallery in Falmouth, owned by Mary Washington University, Fredericksburg, VA.
- 81 John Gaskins "DEPARTED THIS LIFE MARCH THE 12 IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1758".

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The site is situated on part of Stafford Heights with a commanding view of the Rappahannock River (fall line) and the northern environs of Fredericksburg across the river. It is located in Falmouth and within the local, state, and national Falmouth Historic Districts. The site contains the remains (narthex) of the Union Church and the Union Church Cemetery. The site is bordered by the Fredericksburg/Stafford Park Authority, the Moncure Conway House (VDHR easement), several private residences, undeveloped property, and an arterial transportation corridor. The narthex faces Carter Street, however, no street number is assigned to the Union Church. Carter Street has been known as Church Street and was originally named Prince Street. The northern border of the cemetery is along Butler Road originally named Caroline Street. The tax parcel is known as #53-111 as shown on the attached tax map from Stafford County.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary includes the narthex of the Union Church, and the archeological site including two earlier Anglican churches and the burial grounds associated with these three churches. The original public land set aside for a church and cemetery was on a prominence in the northeast corner of the town of Falmouth. This public land was bordered on three sides by original streets (Prince, George, and Caroline) created in 1727-1728 and a natural topographical steep decline forming a fourth boundary. The northwest corner of what was the original public land has been developed and is excluded from the boundary. Except for this northwest corner, the public land remains the same as it did 1727-1728.

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Section PHOTOGRAPHS Page 28_

PHOTOGRAPHS

The following information is common to all photographs:

PROPERTY: Union Church and Cemetery

LOCATION: Stafford County

VDHR FILE NO: 089-0067-0037; 44ST0081

PHOTOGRAPHER: Norman Schools

DATE: 2008

DIGITAL FILE IMAGES LOCATION: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Virginia

VIEW: Union Church, façade

PHOTO: 1 of 8

VIEW: back of the Union Church, narthex

PHOTO: 2 of 8

VIEW: south wall of the Union Church, narthex

PHOTO: 3 of 8

VIEW: north wall of the Union Church, narthex

PHOTO: 4 of 8

VIEW: from the east boundary looking west

PHOTO: 5 of 8

VIEW: from the west boundary looking east

PHOTO: 6 of 8

VIEW: from the south boundary looking north

PHOTO: 7 of 8

VIEW: from the north boundary looking south

PHOTO: 8 of 8

